AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A method for treating post-operative joint pain, the method comprising:

providing an agent for treating joint pain comprising a neurotoxic substance dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent, wherein said neurotoxic substance is an amide local anesthetic, and wherein said amide local anesthetic is present in said agent for treating joint pain in a concentration whereby said agent for treating joint pain is predominantly toxic to nociceptive nerve fibers but not systemically toxic when injected into a post-operative joint space; and

injecting the agent for treating joint pain into said post-operative joint space as a one time application in an amount sufficient to entail neurolysis.

Claim 2 (canceled)

Claim 3 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amide local anesthetic is less neurotoxic to motor and propioceptive nerve fibers than to sensitive nerve fibers.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amide local anesthetic is used at a concentration larger than 4 %.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amide local anesthetic is used jointly with a pH-lowering additive.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive is a bisulfite.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the pH-lowering additive is sodium bisulfite ($NaHSO_3$).

Claim 8 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive is used at a concentration of at least 1 % by weight.

Claim 9 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the pH-lowering additive lowers the pH of the agent for treating joint pain to less than 3.5.

Claim 10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is lidocaine at a concentration larger than 6 %.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is prilocaine at a concentration larger than 3 %.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is mepivacaine at a concentration larger than 5 %.

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is bupivacaine at a concentration larger than 1.5 %.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is levobupivacaine at a concentration larger than 5 %.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is ropivacaine at a concentration larger than 2 %.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is etidocaine at a concentration larger than 2 %.

Claims 18-22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (withdrawn): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the agent for treating joint pain further comprises a second different local anesthetic.

Claim 24 (withdrawn): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the agent for treating joint pain further comprises a third different local anesthetic.

Claim 25 (withdrawn): The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein the amide local anesthetic is bupivacaine and the second different local anesthetic is tetracaine.

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the amide local anesthetic is used in pure, enantiomeric form.

Claim 27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein a phenol or a pharmacologically acceptable phenol salt is used in addition to the amide local anesthetic.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the phenol derivative is a cresol.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the cresol is a chloro cresol selected from the group consisting of 2-chloro-m-cresol, 3-chloro-p-cresol, 4-chloro-m-cresol, 3-chloro-o-cresol, 6-chloro-o-cresol, 2-chloro-p-cresol, 5-chloro-o-cresol, 6-chloro-m-cresol and 4-chloro-o-cresol.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the phenol derivative is a eugenol.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein the phenol derivative is a thymol.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agent for treating joint pain further comprises an x-ray contrast agent that contains gadolinium, iodine or barium in addition to the neurotoxic substance.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bio-compatible solvent is glycerin, and wherein the glycerin is used at a concentration of 10 to 95 % by wt in addition to the neurotoxic substances.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein steroids are used in addition to the neurotoxic substance.

Claim 36 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a vasoconstrictor selected from the group consisting of adrenaline, noradrenaline, phenylephrine and ornipressine, is used in addition to the neurotoxic substance.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the neurotoxic substance is dissolved in a biocompatible solvent selected from the group consisting of glycerin, iophendylate and propyleneglycol.

Claim 38 (canceled)

Claim 39 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the agent further comprises dimethyl sulfoxide as a permeation enhancer.

Claim 40 (previously presented): A method for treating post-operative joint pain, comprising:

injecting an agent comprising a neurotoxic substance dissolved in a bio-compatible solvent into the intra-capsular region or into the joint synovial pouch of the pain-afflicted joint as a one time application at a concentration entailing neurolysis, wherein the neurotoxic substance is an amide local anesthetic and is present in said agent in a concentration whereby said agent is predominantly toxic to nociceptive nerve fibers but not systemically toxic.

Claim 41 (previously presented): The method for treating joint pain as claimed in claim 40, wherein the neurotoxic substance is a mixture of several amide local anesthetics and wherein a liquid volume of 0.1 to 150 ml of the agent is injected into the intra-capsular region or into the joint synovial pouch of the pain-afflicted joint.

Claim 42 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 41, wherein the nociceptive nerve fibers are rendered pain-insensitive by the mixture of several amide local anesthetics for at least 14 days.

Claim 43 (canceled)

Claim 44 (currently amended): The method as claimed in claim 40, wherein the nociceptive nerve fibers are rendered pain-insensitive by ~~the~~ a mixture of several amide local anesthetics for at least 14 days.

Claim 45 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein an analgesic is added to the neurotoxic substance.

Claim 46 (previously presented): The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the bio-compatible solvent is polyethylene glycol.